Live Wire

PUBLISHED BY AIDEN COOK
LOS ANGELES, CA
© 2025 LIVE WIRE

# Live Wire

№1

# HORSEGIRL

&
Dean Blunt
Elias Rønnenfelt
Squid
Fontaines D.C.
John Glacier
The Murder Capital
Maruja
Ichiko Aoba

Your source for music appreciation, Live Wire is a limited print publication about sharing standout music from lesser-known, underground, and alternative spaces. Based in Los Angeles, it covers what's happening in, and what's coming out of, music scenes around California, the United States, and the world.

In the first issue of Live Wire, we cover the new records from Elias Rønnenfelt, Dean Blunt, Maruja, John Glacier, Squid, and Horsegirl, the lattermost of which is featured on the cover. Issue One also features articles on new singles from Fontaines D.C. and Ichiko Aoba. A segment titled "Fan Favorites" connects with readers about their favorite albums from last year. "Live in Los Angeles" shares just a few of the interesting shows playing in Los Angeles this spring.

Designed by Aiden Cook.

# Contents

№1


3 Elias Rønnenfelt and Dean Blunt Collaborate on Lucre

5 Fontaines D.C. Release Surprise Single "It's Amazing To Be Young"

6 Ichiko Aoba Shares New Single "Sonar" to Upcoming Album Luminescent Creatures

7 Fan Favorites

9 Phonetics On and On

11 Tír na nÓg

15 Blindness: The New Album by The Murder Capital

17 Live in Los Angeles (Spring 2025)

19 Artist Over Else

21 Squid and Their New Album: Cowards


Photo by Patrick Cunning

# Elias Rønnenfelt and Dean Blunt collaborate on “Lucre”.

Dean Blunt and Elias Rønnenfelt are both children of the early digital age that birthed the likes of Sonic Youth, Aphex Twin, or LCD Soundsystem. They’ve fallen into the romanticization rabbit hole for aging alternative music culture. While undoubtedly influences, these romanticizations really only create the foundation for which Blunt builds his own castle upon. He’s committed to doing his own thing while showing appreciation to the era of music that molded his development as a musician and producer. Rønnenfelt is in the same boat. Having grown up among a similar culture creates the environment for a collaboration that works as well as this.

Lucre, released February 7th under Blunt’s own label “World Music,” isn’t a major milestone for either artist, but it does serve to establish a snapshot of where they currently sit both as a duo and as individual artists. It plays into Blunt’s obsession with releasing his art with as little commentary from himself as possible. He has no interest in conversations about his creations. He makes art for the sake of art, putting it in the spotlight to receive praise and glory while he sits it out in the shadows.

This isn’t the first time Rønnenfelt and Blunt have collaborated. Rønnenfelt appeared on Blunt’s 2024 single “Smile Please” and his collaborative album with Joanne Robertson, Backstage Raver. Coming from Rønnenfelt’s solo debut Heavy Glory and his other work on Iceage, the influence on Lucre is obvious. The lush and longing vocal style he harnesses complements the beloved flowy, melodic, dream-inducing sounds that Blunt is known for. Heavy Glory solidified the expectation for Rønnenfelt to bring to the table. The mix of Heavy Glory’s flowy harmonica and energetic, almost folk guitar strumming works beautifully with Blunt’s melodic, dreamy instrumentals. Not to mention how Rønnenfelt’s lush, longing vocals seem to just float on calm waters, rising and falling with the waves of Blunt’s mix.

A whole article could be written on the production of this EP alone, largely featuring work from Vegyn, the talent behind Only Diamonds Cut Diamonds and The Head Hurts but the Heart Knows the Truth, alongside Blunt. From front to back, the whole record is full of warm, shiny sounds that pull you right in. They evoke an image of sitting on the lakeside watching the shiny ripples pass by the bank. Listening, it feels so easy to find yourself there, lying back and closing your eyes, feeling the sun on your skin, hearing the ripples fizzle out on the bank. Hearing Rønnenfelt and Blunt’s talents merge on Lucre, brings out the influences molded by the culture of early 00s alternative music where they both discovered their sound, leaving Lucre as a testament to acknowledging your influences and inspirations while leaving space for your own artistic development.

*Photos by Ilaria Ieie (top) and Joshua Gordon (bottom)*

## Fontaines D.C. Release Surprise Single, “It’s Amazing To Be Young”

Fontaines D.C., in August of 2024, released Romance. You would think that creating that album, touring across four continents in support, and simply taking a minute to lay back and relax in the wake of an album release would give the fans some breathing room. You’d be wrong. In the middle of touring season was the pleasantly surprising release of “It’s Amazing To Be Young”. The single, seemingly written for the album but never making it to the final cut, continues in the direction that Romance brought the band, embracing a more-garage-rock less-post-rock sound.

Written just as Carlos O'Connell’s newborn child was born, the “profound and moving” moments of childbearing bring out a sense of being lost in your own world. Similar to fan-beloved “Favourite” off Romance, the single feels yearning but lighthearted, and brings out an appreciation for the things in front of you despite a larger world that seems to be constantly eroding away.

“It’s Amazing To Be Young” and an unreleased b-side, “Before You I Just Forget”, are available for preorder on limited edition 7” vinyl.

Photo by Theo Cottle

It’s been just over four years since Ichiko Aoba’s last full length album, アダンの風 (Windswept Adan), not counting the soundtrack of 2022 film あみこ (Amiko). That’s to say, Ichiko Aoba fans have long awaited the new full-length album titled Luminescent Creatures.

The album is very ambient when compared to earlier work from Aoba, but does have some more energetic standouts, “Coloratura” in particular. It feels much more reminiscent of Aoba’s earlier work, especially on Windswept Adan. The last single, “Sonar”, is a standout. Beyond the vocals and main piano arrangement, all we hear are soft indistinct flutters and chimes behind the mix. It’s very apparent how quiet the atmosphere is, almost akin to a lullaby. The simplicity is graceful and serene, and really pronounces the emotional impact as a whole.

Ichiko Aoba begins her EU tour on March 10th at Paral•lel 62 in Barcelona and her US tour on April 17th at the Hawaii Theatre in Honolulu, Hawaii.

## Ichiko Aoba Shares Highly Anticipated New Album, *Luminescent Creatures*

Photo by Shiori Ikeno

# "What was your favorite release of 2024?"

# FAN FAVORITES

XclocktowerX
**Greatest Hits: Vol 2**
Released 18 January 2024

Cayden says "Fun and awesome time for the whole family."

Porter Robinson
**SMILE! :D**
Released 26 July 2024

Greg says "I love the energy and excitement that he brings."

Kendrick Lamar
**GNX**
Released 22 November 2024

Sevens says "Kendrick's crooning swagger uplifts real people."

Adrianne Lenker
**Bright Future**
Released 22 March 2024

Ella says "The lyrics are so pretty !!"

OG Keemo
**Fieber**
Released 5 January 2024

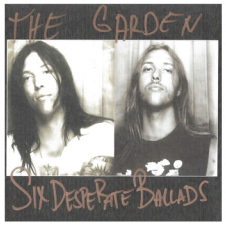
Valentin says "Love the production."

Mk.gee
**Two Star & The Dream Police**
Released 9 February 2024

Chris says "The atmosphere is so good."

Yaelokre
**Hayfields**
Released 2 March 2024

Jojo says "Amazing vocals."




The Garden
**Six Desperate Ballads**
Released 30 October 2024

Evan says "Cohesive, short and sweet."

Suki Waterhouse
**Memoir of a Sparklemuffin**
Released 13 September 2024

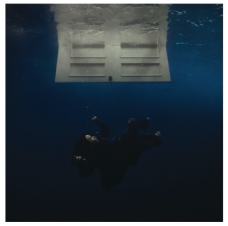
Rachel says "Has a really unique sound."

Beabadoobee
**This Is How Tomorrow Moves**
Released 9 August 2024

Mateo says "It makes me feel like I'm floating."

MJ Lenderman
**Manning Fireworks**
Released 6 September 2024

Lucy says "It's an album you can play while you're doing anything."



Billie Eilish
**Hit Me Hard and Soft**
Released 17 May 2024

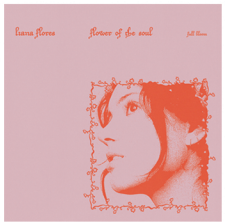
McLaren says "I like her lyrics."

Mount Eerie
**Night Palace**
Released 1 November 2024

Adam says "He's so solemnly at peace with existence."

HYBS
**Well Done**
Released 27 February 2024

Alex says "Feels very comforting and sort of nostalgic."




Liana Flores
**Flower of the Soul (Full Bloom)**
Released 25 October 2024

Kat says "I love the jazz/bossa nova feel."

Tyler, The Creator
**Chromakopia**
Released 28 October 2024

Bella says "I like the creativity and the transitions."

The Crane Wives
**Beyond Beyond Beyond**
Released 6 September 2024

Aria says "My current fav band."

Fontaines D.C.
**Romance**
Released 23 August 2024

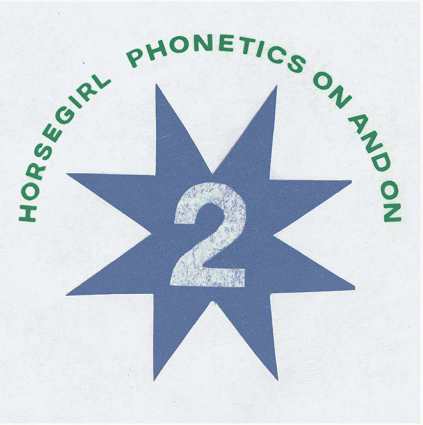
Aiden says "Beautiful."

# Phonetics On and On

Horsegirl's first record, Versions of Modern Performance, is a web of noise rock, with layers upon layers of interwoven instrumental and vocal tracks. It was also what Horsegirl believed to be their "high school" record. Phonetics On and On, however, mellows out the band's image with a lighthearted twee twist. The record revels in the beauty that comes with a relatively minimalistic palette. Working with so few instruments and very little layering forces the band to be creative with their decisions and make sure every detail is purposefully curated, as there's no room to hide a lack of intention behind a complicated mix.

This being their second record, the band lets out a relieving exhale as they find solace in having settled their navigation around the transition to young adulthood. As we get older, we only wish we had appreciated what we had in our youth: liveliness, simplicity, a sense of curiosity. As we mature, we go to school, find work, build families, create responsibilities - we lose the side of ourselves that just wants to explore, both our inner selves and the world. When it comes to Versions of Modern Performance, there was a piercing sense of teenage angst in their noise rock side. On Phonetics On and On, they try to appreciate and understand that side of themselves. They don't shy away from it, rather, they try to build it up. They relish in their childhood instincts and they find solace in what it means to be young, that is, the feeling of true freedom and optimism that gets whittled down in age. The album is full of sounds that bring out childhood nostalgia. It gives off the feeling of creating little songs full of repetition, innocent storylines, and mnemonic themes, as any child would do to pass the time. Take "2468": the song evokes the kind of tune a schoolteacher would sing to you to help you learn odd and even numbers. It recalls warm imagery of wandering the school playground, radiating a charming sense of curiosity.

Non-lexical vocables appear in every single track, whether in the backing vocals or right at the front of the mix. "La-da, da-da.", "Fa-la-la, la-la, la-la.", "La-di, da-di, da, da", "Ooh-whoo-hoo, whoo-hoo". The types of little jingles that would play through your head as you played hopscotch on a sunny, summer day. The lyrical imagery is no different. "When he can't sleep, he'll blame the sheep", for when your parents might have reminded you to count sheep when you couldn't fall asleep. "I wanna sing like I do out your window...When the radio's blue, listen to your window", for finding silly ways to pass the time on a weekend. "Every car that passes by drives to you...Your footprints on the street, they walk in twos", for noticing and finding a fascination in the simple things. We often take the simple things for granted: walking, seeing. Now, you hardly even notice them. You don't pay attention to every car that passes you or every footstep you take. Actively appreciating things like these is often associated with being a young child, trying to understand and grasp the world around them. We so easily lose the beauty of this simplicity as we grow up. While the album does feel like an appreciation of youth and childhood, there's no need to analyze it so extensively to understand it. At its core, it's a fun album to listen to, and that's what sells the message so subtly. While the instrumentals do compliment each other beautifully and the vocals do feel warm and inviting, the album doesn't overcomplicate what doesn't need to be overcomplicated, which is both charming and, ultimately representative of the essence of childhood.




Horsegirl begin their EU tour on June 10th at Molotow Musikclub in Hamburg and the second half of their US tour on August 4th at the High Noon Saloon in Madison, Wisconsin.

Photo by Alexa Viscius

# Tír na nÓg

Simply, Maruja's Tír na nÓg, their third and final EP in the series, is somehow beautiful and fragile and vigorous and rugged, all at the same time. It's full of addictingly visceral jazz-rock that drags you into the headspace Maruja demand and, for such a seemingly well-crafted and thoughtfully put together composition, it would surprise just about anyone that the entire piece was improvised. It just shows that most of the intrigue in Maruja really comes from how their passion translates through the music.

The Manchester band's previous two EPs, 2023's Knocknarea and 2024's Connla's Well, were both well received and largely received critical acclaim as some of the best recent work to come out of the UK's underground scenes. Knocknarea established them as a driving force in underground post-rock, and now with their EP trilogy completed, it's easy to cement them as pioneers, pushing the genre into new territory.

With no lyrics at all, beyond the vocal instrumentation, the instrumental work dictates the entire reception of the song. Maruja have had to be precise with exactly how they play. There's no room to clean up their apocalyptic messaging with the lyrics. The instrumentals bear all the weight, and manage to hold up very well. Although the saxophone is normally a standout in Maruja's music, its impact on this EP in particular feels much greater, largely thanks to the lack of vocal lead. Joe Carroll's impassioned playing is the motivation behind all the other instrumentation, directing the flow of the music. It makes the entire EP entirely too easy to get lost in.

The anxious atmosphere that arched over the first two EPs fizzles out on Tír na nÓg. While parts of the EP could be seen as anxious, many elements align much more closely with dread. Maruja have said in the past, notably in an interview with Acid Rain, that their music tends to reflect the atmosphere society embraces, whether it be dread, anxiety, or celebration. In Knocknarea and Connla's Well, the group embraced the fury and dread they felt in response to the British government's actions, the police, and so on. For this EP, there's a pungent atmosphere of hopelessness that Maruja try to embrace. As the world seems to be moving quicker and quicker in the wrong direction, Maruja acknowledge the lingering sense of dread. However, despite all this, this EP does have an underlying passion and optimism that floats underneath all of the aggressive instrumentals. The cover art, along with the title, Tír na nÓg, meaning "Land of the Young" in Celtic folklore, warms up the audience back into a state of mind that promotes positive change, protest, spirit, creation, hope. The trilogy as a whole desires to explore the pain and anguish in our world and the driving forces behind it. This final EP, as any good conclusion does, takes us out of the clouds, brings us back into our own minds and bodies, and harps on about the necessity of optimism in a world that appears in many ways beyond repair.

LIVE IRE

# Blindness

## *The New Album by The Murder Capital*

This album is bold. It feels new and profound but still distinctly-Murder-Capital. Relistening to When I Have Fears and Gigi's Recovery in anticipation, it's easy to understand the progression The Murder Capital are seeing as a band, especially when listening to their music in succession. While Gigi's Recovery is widely beloved among post-punk fans, it's noticeable how curated it felt, when compared to Blindness. Murder Capital have let go of the constraints with this record, and with it, found a new passion to embed into their music making.

Opening with "Moonshot", the band clearly isn't beating around the bush with their message. Perfectly setting up the tone for the rest of the album, they take on ideas of youth, passion, and having a strong fighting spirit. They pull us right into the rough with no opportunity to turn back, and by the time you find one, the album is halfway over and you're being serenaded by the desperate cries of "Love Of Country". Now, you don't want to turn back. While there are some slower moments on the album, there's no lack of passion, and that consistent feeling of an underlying spirit of drive and action pierces any instrumental cover atop it. Songs like "Born Into The Fight", "Love Of Country", or "Swallow" don't even try to be subtle with their core tenets. The lattermost, in particular, falls into this pit of bargaining where James McGovern's vocals seem to plead with a power above, trying to find reasoning or justification for the things he has seen hurt or damaged by weaponized nationalism.

You have to brace for "The Fall", as it takes you through the modern activist's expressionist existence. At only three minutes, there is thrill after thrill. One moment you're chained underwater, trying to find a moment to bob up and catch a breath, the next, you're standing on the pedestal, screaming and chanting your heart out right next to the band. The eerie chorus, "I can't be told, I can't be dressed, I can't be held, I can't be fed, I can't be whipped" sends the message, which is already going at a thousand miles an hour, over the finish line. The energetic tracks are full of energy and urgency, and are rightfully addicting. The passion they have for their words and sounds is so clear in their slower tracks. "Swallow", a standout track, has gorgeous instrumental work that's been constantly replayed throughout writing this piece. While very pleasing to the ears, it also continues to build the world that the album has been restlessly constructing.

The Murder Capital with their two previous records, now along with this one, have been able to really find a respectable space in the Irish post-punk niche. While checking many of the same boxes as bands in the same niche, notably Fontaines D.C., it's very comforting to see bands like these diverge into their own, raw, styles and impulses.

The core of the album is that The Murder Capital doesn't care what you think. They don't care what this article says or what any other article in any other publication in the world says. They don't need validation. It's not what they want. It's not what they are trying to achieve. They're telling their story, to carve out their truth, and to lay bare their vision of right and wrong, no matter who's listening.

The Murder Capital start their EU tour on April 29th at Lisboa ao Vivo in Lisbon.

# Live in Los Angeles

## SPRING 2025

Astrid Sonne
Mar 23 @ Zebulon

Sun Kil Moon
Mar 28 @ Teragram Ballroom

Franz Ferdinand
Mar 29 @ The Wiltern

Old 97's
Mar 30 @ Teragram Ballroom

Hovvdy
Apr 2 @ El Rey Theatre

Deux Visages
Apr 2 @ The Glass House

Hey, Nothing
Apr 2 @ The Roxy Theatre

Widowdusk, Lowertown
Apr 3 @ Lodge Room Highland Park

Free Throw
Apr 3, 4 @ Echoplex

Weatherday
Apr 4 @ El Cid

This Is Lorelei
Apr 4 @ Scribble

Algernon Cadwallader
Apr 5 @ Echoplex

Yesness
Apr 6 @ Moroccan Lounge

Citizen
Apr 6 @ The Torch

Alice Phoebe Lou
Apr 6, 7, 8 @ Lodge Room Highland Park

The Dare
Apr 9 @ The Glass House

Ducks Ltd.
Apr 10 @ Lodge Room Highland Park

Jimmy Eat World, Glixen
Apr 10 @ The Fox Theater Pomona

Noun
Apr 13 @ Teragram Ball Room

Lola Young
Apr 15 @ The Fonda Theatre

Julie
Apr 16 @ The Glass House Concert Hall

Beabadoobee
Apr 17 @ The Fox Theater Pomona

Beth Gibbons
Apr 17 @ The Orpheum Theatre

Kneecap
Apr 17 @ The Glass House

Etran de L'Aïr
Apr 19 @ Teragram Ballroom

Kim Gordon
Apr 24 @ The Belasco Theater

Psychadelic Porn Crumpets
Apr 26 @ The Observatory

Ichiko Aoba
Apr 26, 27 @ The Wiltern

Hana Stretton
Apr 26 @ Scribble

Mogwai
Apr 29 @ The Bellwether

Geordie Greep
Apr 29, May 1 @ The Observatory, The Wiltern

Godspeed You! Black Emperor
Apr 30, May 1 @ The Bellwether, The Observatory

Saetia
May 3 @ Lodge Room Highland Park

Oneohtrix Point Never, Earth
May 7 @ The Wiltern

Yo La Tengo
May 8 @ The Novo

Friko
May 9 @ Lodge Room Highland Park

Momma
May 9 @ The Fonda Theatre

Spiritbox, Loathe
May 10, 11 @ Hollywood Palladium

Jack White
May 12 @ Hollywood Palladium

Turnover
May 16, 18 @ The Greek Theatre, Toyota Arena

Alice Longyu Gao
May 16 @ The Echo

Horse Jumper of Love
May 16 @ The Greek Theatre

Black Country, New Road
May 19, 20 @ The Observatory, The Wiltern

Sharon Van Etten
May 21 @ The Wiltern

Jane Remover
May 21 @ El Rey Theatre

Been Stellar
May 22 @ The Echo

Widowdusk, Inlovingmemory
May 23 @ The Shed (AD)

Othiel
May 24 @ Teragram Ballroom

Swirlies
May 24 @ Hollywood Palladium

George Clanton, Slater
May 24 @ The Belasco

Kraus
May 25 @ Echoplex

Your Renaissance Fest: Widowdusk, Vs Self, & more
May 25 @ The Echo

Benches
June 10, 11 @ Constellation Room, Echoplex

Preoccupations
June 12 @ Lodge Room Highland Park

Panchiko, Kitty Craft
June 14 @ Hollywood Palladium

Pixies
June 20, 21 @ Hollywood Palladium

# ARTIST OVER ELSE

**From being the face of a Burberry campaign two years ago** to now, just weeks ago, finding herself on a BBC interview surrounding her debut album, John Glacier seems to find herself at the forefront of whatever new artistic direction she pursues. Her album, Like A Ribbon, came out on Valentine's Day this year under release from Young, a label best known for flaunting the best and brightest of our generation's electronic and post-everything underground scenes (from the likes of Sampha, FKA Twigs, Jamie xx, among others). Glacier is no exception, with her record oozing timeless electronic arrangements and sampleplay, and artfully drawing from her diverse influences in post-punk, rave music, and London drill.

**Her instrumentals are incredibly unique and, while being** able to pinpoint her musical inspirations, they really are creating something new. No different from any other artist, Glacier is a product of what she grew up around: London's underground scene. With production work from Kwes Darko, a frequent collaborator of Slowthai, the drill of London's underground experimental hip-hop and R&B scenes clearly connect to her sound. She's no stranger to the experimental and art pop of Arca or James Blake, or the deep rooted noise and post-punk influences of Dean Blunt and "World Music", or even King Krule's notoriously moody and raw delivery.

**A consistent imagery underlines each song, both in the** instrumentals and in the lyrics. "Floating in the winds, let the birds float by", "Summer trees", "Whole world at my feet", "Green grass where the grass never knew": all building the precedent for optimism and looking forward, while ultimately living in the moment and appreciating life as it comes. Her music only confirms what already seems obvious from Glacier's online presence and progression as an artist. Gratuity is at the core of her and her art. Glacier, as she would state herself, aligns more closely with the label of artist rather than just musician or rapper, and while out celebrating the release of Like A Ribbon, she's likely finding new artistic outlets in the smallest things, from appreciating and writing about the night sky (per a recent Instagram post) to directing her own music video (Money Shows).

Photo by Nova Wiraka

# SQUID

Early February saw the release of UK post-rock band Squid's third full length album, Cowards. Immediately, the record feels much cleaner than previous albums, O Monolith and Bright Green Field. That's not to say Squid feel restrained in their songwriting or performing, moreso that Cowards has stripped away the raw elements and sanded off the rough edges, only leaving the core makeup of the music. While many say that this takes away some of the band's charm or appeal, really, the record just feels more calculated and purposeful.

This is more than just a creative choice. In reality, it reflects progression of Squid's lyrical content. Their first two albums heavily focused on topics plaguing society: police brutality, unjust institutions, and alt-right politics, especially in the British context. With Cowards, their fight steers closer towards the core reasons behind the state and movement of society toward these ideas. Humanity, empathy, and people's connection to their community are at the heart of every song. Larger society's abandonment of the people in lieu of ideologies, as is taken up on "Blood on the Boulders", is an important idea that makes its way into the album's underlying messaging. Each and every song is driven by its message. They are the foundations that sit under each instrument. The underlying decisions, like the more controlled direction of this album's entire sound, are driven by the fact that the band has decided that, here, with these songs, to approach their messages from a different perspective: one that's more philosophical—less concrete—in nature, creating the space for transparency in these necessary conversations.

Photo by Alex Kirmizis

# BONUS RELEASES!

There aren't enough pages in this zine to cover every recent release that deserves a spotlight, but you can find some of them here.
Don't let them slip under your radar!

"Dog Rose" by Brown Horse
"Zig Zag" by By Storm
*9* by Child Star
"Pitching Stones" by Flyingfish
*Universe Room* by Guided By Voices
"Mega Circuit" by Japanese Breakfast
*Choke Enough* by Oklou
"Honeycomb" by Panchiko
*End of the Middle* by Richard Dawson
*Sharon Van Etten & The Attachment Theory* by Sharon Van Etten
*Shards* by Tim Hecker
"Tiara" by Weatherday
*12* by Westside Gunn
*Rarely Do I Dream* by Youth Lagoon